THE DRAGONET PROPHECY REREAD | Chapters 31-32 AND Chapters 33-34 | Oncilla

phoenixdragon1690

Tryin' something a little different today, since due to real life I was unable to get last week's reread out. Today we're going to do TWO REREAD POSTS IN ONE--and yes, that means four chapters. They'll be split up into chunks of two, though, since that's how they were written.

[mods, please please let this through I don't want to have to redo all the formatting]

CHAPTERS 31-32

Hello all, and welcome back to the TDP reread. Today we'll be beginning PART 3: *An Egg the Color of Dragon Blood.* I hope y'all are hyped for book 11.

This reread may contain SPOILERS for any and all Wings of Fire books. If you have not finished the series, read ahead at your own peril.

SUMMARY
Chapter 31: After swimming downstream all day and into the night, the Dragonets of Destiny finally climb out of the river to hunt and rest. Sunny wonders why Burn wants to kill them, and the dragonets discuss the pros and cons of the three queens. After the others fall asleep, Clay asks Glory about her venom, and she snaps at him; he falls asleep wondering why she's mad at him, and when he wakes up a couple hours later, she's gone. Tsunami yells at him for choosing Peril over Glory; Clay and Sunny argue that they didn't think it was one or the other; Clay declares that they're going to find her, and then Glory reveals that she wasn't gone, just invisible. They get back into the river and keep swimming as dawn breaks--and then they come across a battlefield.

Chapter 32: The dragonets gaze out in horror at the battlefield, attempting to make sense of the carnage. *(At this point Oncilla decides to only update the Gruesome Death Count for deaths we actually see happening.)* Clay realizes that his friends will stick out like a sore thumb in the Mud Kingdom; Glory turns her scales brown so she looks like a MudWing, and she and Clay leave the others by the river while they go into the village. They come across a MudWing troop practicing formations and, with some confusion on both sides, manage to ask about Clay's egg. The other MudWing points them to a sleephouse, and Clay and Glory hurry over, catching the eyes of a dragonet about their age on the way. And then Clay is standing face-to-face with his mother.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
"The dragonets fell silent. The enormity of the sky above them made Clay feel very small. It seemed crazy to think that they'd get to choose the next SandWing queen, let alone end the war. Who would listen to them? Certainly not the rival queens themselves. How could five dragonets make anything happen?"

I love the atmosphere in this paragraph.

THE DRAGONETS
"Of course you did," Tsunami said to her. "We always know what you're thinking."
Sunny's back spines flared up. "Do we?" she said in a voice as close to a growl as Clay had ever heard from her.

"Who won*?" Sunny cried. "Nobody. Nobody could look at this place and think, 'hooray, we won.' They just couldn't." Her voice was subdued and sad and furious all at once.*

Sunny :D

Oh wait, that's interesting. It mentions in the scene of that last quote that Glory, Tsunami, and Clay all feel sick...but for Sunny it's just "subdued and sad and furious." I wonder if that means anything, or if it's just because Clay couldn't see her face?

THE QUEENS
"Dark shapes wheeled over the peaks like bats. Burn had not given up searching for them, and probably wouldn't any time soon, Tsunami pointed out."

There's a very nice breakdown of the three SandWing princesses here, at the beginning of chapter 31 immediately after the above quote, but it's nearly a page long so I'm not going to quote it.

OTHER DRAGONS
It's Umber! He might be important later or something, IDK. He's the only MudWing in the village who notices Clay here.

Okay, so, I've never noticed this before, but it seems like Cattail and her sibs are living in the most squalid slum area of the Delta/are on the lowest rung of the social ladder. The first MudWing Clay talks to says that "That troop has no discipline." Their sleephouse is described as "lopsided," with a "crumbling hole toward the top, as if a dragon had punched through the mud in a rage at some point." They're in a more isolated part of the village, next to a lake described as "stagnant, reed-choked water" with "a heavy smell of rotting vegetation."

Likewise, Cattail and co have a very *poorest-of-the-poor/desperation* kind of feel behavior-wise. Honestly, I feel like had this been written for a slightly older audience, at least one of them would have been an alcoholic and/or drug addict--that's certainly the vibe I'm getting from them. It would fit with that first MudWing's assertion that "their bigwings hasn't been the same since Asha left"--the next chapter implies that Asha was the most hopeful and idealistic of their troop; perhaps her departure sent the bigwings into a depressive spiral that, in turn, led to substance abuse.

Uh, wow, that got heavy. Hopefully the mods let it through. :P Maybe it'll help if I add in the obligatory PSA: DON'T DO DRUGS, kids, otherwise y'all might end up living next to a lake of trash water with your roof falling in. And also your brains will get fried and stuff.

WORLDBUILDING
Carrots. Also a wild boar. Yay.

They're in the foothills of the Claws of the Clouds Mountains for most of chapter 31, and in the Diamond Spray Delta in chapter 32.

"Most of the trees were covered in hanging vines, although when Clay looked closer, he could see that some of the vines were actually thick coils of crimson and olive-green snakes."

BIOLOGY AND CULTURE
MudWiiiinnnngsssss

"He could see the homes of the MudWings--tall mounds made of mud, several dragons high and several more wide, jutting out of the marshes like fat brown teeth."

We're starting to get hints here that MudWings don't do families the way we do. Also, there are several of them sleeping in the mud.

Troops are "between five and nine dragons."

"Maybe they're like army troops," Glory guesses. "You stick with your own soldiers. Maybe that's what makes them such strong fighters, because they have these little loyal units within the army."
"Maybe," Clay said. He liked how close the dragons within each group were. But it made him nervous that no one had greeted him and Glory or asked who they were or anything.

"Clay could see evidence of the IceWings' freezing breath, even now, when most of the ice would have melted. Several patches of dirt glittered with tiny ice crystals, where blasts of cold air had missed and frozen

the ground instead. And on some of the corpses, body parts had been sheared off in sharp, clean lines, where half a leg had been frozen and then fallen away." Yeesh.

"I still think you're too pretty to be a MudWing," Clay said doubtfully. [Glory] was too long and graceful, and the ruff around her ears wasn't very MudWing either, although she could fold it back until it was hard to spot. And if she kept her tail straight instead of curling it like a RainWing's….

BODY LANGUAGE + NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION:
As mentioned above, "Sunny's back spines flared up."

CULTURAL BIASES
The reason Sunny and Tsunami don't come into the village with them.

DRAGONSPEAK
MudWing terminology starts coming into play here. "Unsibs/sibs," "bigwings," etc.

COMMENTARY
"Nonsense," Tsunami said. "You're just as pretty as Glory, Clay," Sunny nodded vigorously.
XD

"As they flew down into the marshes, Clay wondered why no one had come to bury or burn the dead on the battlefield."
Probably because, as one of Clay's sibs mentions a couple chapters from now, the battle was only a couple days before. I imagine the plan for this day is to deal with the carnage.

Also, does this mean the IceWing army is still camped somewhere nearby?

CHAPTERS 33-34

SUMMARY
Chapter 33: Clay announces that he's Cattail's son...and is met with the news that she didn't lose his egg--she sold it to the Talons of Peace. Clay is crushed. They discuss Asha, and then he asks about his father; Cattail explains that MudWings don't do things that way. Glory leads Clay away as he tries to sort through his emotions, but when they reach the village, one of Burn's SandWings is asking after the dragonets. Clay and Glory attempt to sneak away, but just as they take to the sky, someone calls out after them….

Chapter 34: Clay nearly panics and runs, but Glory stops him. They talk to the dragonets who called after them, and it doesn't take them long to figure out that Clay is actually their missing sibling. They explain MudWing society to him; Clay is delighted to learn that he wasn't actually attacking the others when he hatched. His sibs invite him to stay, but Clay declines--he can't lead them as well as Reed can, and besides, he's got a destiny.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
"Clay felt like he was filling up with warm summer clouds. Kestrel was wrong, all wrong about him, and she always had been. His strength wasn't for killing and violence; it was for protecting his brothers and sisters. He wasn't destined to be a monster. He wasn't a killer deep inside somewhere.
He was a bigwings."

THE DRAGONETS
Clay's emotions are all over the place in these chapters--hopeful to crushed to hopeful again to delighted to bittersweetly sad as he wonders if he can stop the war in time to save his siblings.

"She was trying to help fulfill the prophecy," Glory snapped. "At least the Talons care about something besides themselves." Clay would have laughed if he hadn't felt so crushed. That was the nicest thing Glory had ever said about the Talons of Peace.

I love how fiercely Glory defends Clay in this chapter, and how she tries to cheer him up after meeting Cattail. Remember, it was only a few hours earlier that she was mad enough at him that she was considering leaving.

OTHER DRAGONS
"[Reed] glanced sidelong at Clay, and in his amber eyes Clay could see all the worries he'd ever felt himself...all the fears for his friends, all the things he'd done and would do to protect them, all the ferocity of how much he cared about them."

After rereading these chapters, I stand by my assessment of Cattail + co as possible drunkards and as definitely very, very poor.

BIOLOGY AND CULTURE
I mean, these two chapters give us pretty much all the information we have on MudWing society. I could quote basically the whole chapters here. (Spoiler alert: I'm not gonna.)

I will quote this bit though, because it captures the *feel* of MudWing life: "They were happy to explain it all to him, their words tumbling over one another. The five of them coiled together naturally in the tall grass, tails and talons and wings entwined, with Umber climbing up their backs and standing on heads to make himself heard."

Also this because it's not just about MudWings: "Dragons did not cry easily, and Clay had never shed tears in his whole life, no matter how much Kestrel had hurt him with words or claws." Interesting information here; I wonder if that stays true throughout the series? Keep an eye out for instances of dragons crying, if you don't mind, 'cause I would like to know!

BODY LANGUAGE + NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION:
"Are you Cattail?" [Glory] asked. "Asha's sister?"
The dappled dragon gave a little hiss and ducked her head. "Yes."
...
She flicked her tongue in and out with a growl.

Suddenly Glory stopped with a hiss.

COMMENTARY
I would be interested to see fanfic from Cattail's PoV directly following this scene, when she has to deliver the news that Asha's dead to her sibs. I also think you could get some really interesting fic from the concept of unsibs--that's practically a goldmine of angst and interpersonal conflict.

Welp, that's all for now. It's kind of a lot at once, isn't it? See you next week, when we wrap up this reread with chapter 35 and the Epilogue--we've reached the end of the book! In the meantime, if somebody could do the annotations it would be much appreciated.

Previous reread: /328312 Index: /317770

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Such is the path of a dreamer: I find my way by moonlight.

~Oncilla~

Queen of Non Sequitur, Bookwyrms, Pangolins, and Bones

Trash Squad, Werewolf, GASTER FOLLOWER

`Writer, roleplayer, nerd`

WoFMBer Dec. 2014-Mar. 2019

catchingmoonlight86

Amazing breakdown, as always, Oncilla!
In *TDS*, Fatespeaker cries, her tears mingling with the rain, after mild spoiler Squid leaves.

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I am Koray
she/her
I'm the one with a sign saying "Free Stories"
Fear of the dark and specters, and nightmares

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phoenixdragon1690

In case my other post doesn't come through, thank you!

On a semi-related note, I actually dreamed last night that I was working on the reread....

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phoenixdragon1690

Thank you!

Awesome, good to know. It's been a while since I've read TDS all the way through....

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moonsteel33

HOW DO YOU DO THIS ONCILLA?! YOUR MIND IS SO COOL
When you finish TDP are you gonna continue on to TLH? Maybe after a few-week break or something?

0

Sanetra

11562+ stars - Apr 2017 - Mar 2019

Life is the greatest gift. You've all helped shape mine. I can never thank you all enough. It's been so good.

Amigos
*eureka*DarkseaBearBlackberryVertigoLector*Gulfy*Caleo*Zodiak*TS
...I'm with you to the end

THE DRAGONET PROPHECY REREAD | Chapters 31-32 AND Chapters 33-34 | Oncilla

phoenixdragon1690

That's the plan. Finish this book, take a few weeks off so everybody can read *The Lost Continent,* start on TLH some time in July.

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cleverdragon364

Chapter 31

"And I dug up these awesome wild carrots but nobody else wants to eat them."
Tui: This might be a good time to answer a question I get fairly often...yes, everything is a bit bigger in the dragon world than it would be in our world. These carrots, for instance, are probably as long as a human's arm; the blueberries in a scene in book six are the size of a human fist. So you don't have to imagine these great enormous dragons popping teeny little berries and carrots in their mouths! Because this is a dragon world, everything is a bit more dragon-sized.

"What?" Clay sputtered. "That's not fair. It's like I'm in trouble for failing some kind of secret test only girl dragons know about."
Tui: As someone who administered many of these secret tests to guys when I was a teenager, I completely see Tsunami's point and why Glory is upset -- but I also think it's funny to see Clay's perfectly innocent, hapless reaction.

"Of course you did," Tsunami said to [Sunny]. "We always know what you're thinking."
Tui: ARGH! Can you imagine for one minute how annoying it would be to have someone say this to you? Like you're so predictable and simple? Even Sunny's best friends have this really reductive idea of her that they fall back on, instead of trying to see below the surface.

"It was Tsunami's idea!" Glory said. "Be mad at her."
Tui: One thing I like about it, though, is that it feels like a very sister-y thing to do. For Glory and Tsunami to come up with this trick, out of an argument they're having, and then execute it together -- to me it makes them feel even more like sisters.

"Next time we stop, we should shake mud all over her," Clay suggested.
Tui: Personally, I always prefer stories that break up the action scenes with a lot of small character stuff -- like, even heroes can argue and joke around and worry about their relationships. I think Joss Whedon does this really well (the scene in Avengers 2 where everyone is trying to lift Thor's hammer, for instance) -- I feel like I learned a lot about great storytelling from watching Buffy the Vampire Slayer!

Sunny wrinkled her snout at him. "I'm serious! You've always said we have to stick together. You always stop the others from fighting. You should tell them that means we have to trust each other, too. And you should tell them to be better listeners. You know, to everyone."
Tui: "Ahem, such as, for instance, ME." (is the subtext here!).

Chapter 32

Clay remembered Kestrel saying something about "lowest-born" MudWings living around the delta.
Tui: Once I knew that Tsunami was going to be royalty, I wanted at least one of the others to come from the opposite background...as far away from the center of power as possible...to fit the idea that heroes can come from anywhere.

"Look, I'm sorry there's only two of you left," the MudWing said bluntly, "but we're not looking to add anyone. We've only lost one in three years, and that's because we're focused, we practice every sunrise, and we don't bring in unsibs."

Tui: It was really exciting to finally get to the Mud Kingdom and reveal all these things about the tribe that I'd been planning. Clay has all these expectations, but it feels a bit like arriving on an alien planet and trying to interpret their unfamiliar customs!

"Somehow," the other dragon snorted. "That troop has no discipline. And their bigwings hasn't been the same since Asha left. They're down to four now."
Tui: I included this scene partly to show that even within the MudWings, there are differences - some who get up at the crack of dawn to train, and some who are just never going to do that. (Such as me; I'm definitely in the second category.)

"There's a dragon in there," he whispered. Now he could see two ears like his sticking up behind the eyes, and two nostrils poking out of the mud in front. The eyes regarded him narrowly for a moment, then closed. The dragon sank below the mud again.
Tui: It's possible I watched a documentary about crocodiles and took some notes for this scene!

"Gosh, they look comfortable," Clay said.
Tui: Ha ha, not everyone's first reaction!

None of them took any notice of Clay or Glory, which struck him as odd. The dragons seemed uninterested in strangers in their midst. He noticed that they stayed in their troops, each somewhere between five and nine dragons, talking only to the other MudWings in their own group.
Tui: Hopefully you can start to intuit that there are upsides and downsides to this organization of their society - extreme loyalty within their groups, for instance, but not much curiosity about or connection with anyone else.

One group of six all came out of the same mound and then formed a circle around it, stretching their wings and necks and tails in unison.
Tui: Dragon yoga! :)

Next to the lake was a lopsided mound with a crumbling hole toward the top, as if a dragon had punched through the mud in a rage at some point.
Tui: This is pretty much exactly what I think happened, and I know when and why, if I ever decide to write Asha's story.

The dragon squinted at him, then withdrew into the mound. They heard grumbling and grunts and wings flapping, as if the MudWings inside were scrunching around to let one of them climb over the others.
Tui: I'm imagining that the MudWings in the sleephouse all sleep in a kind of pile together, much like Clay and his friends did in the earlier scene.

Chapter 33

"So?" Cattail said.
Tui: For some reason, this whole scene between Clay and Cattail was one of the easiest for me to write...maybe because she's so delightfully awful.

"You sold *me?" Clay cried.*
Tui: Worst mom ever? I don't know - in this book there are a few candidates!

"That's Asha, all right," Cattail said. "She was always softhearted and mushy about crazy things. She loved mooning around little dragonets, telling the story of that prophecy. She left a lot of blithering, obsessed dreamy-eyed dragons behind in this village, let me tell you; they still won't shut up about destiny and peace and all that."
Tui: So Asha was a storyteller...and this hints at the power of stories: even long after she's gone, the dragonets who heard them still believe in the prophecy.

But now, suddenly, he had a glimpse of what their life could have been like if Asha had lived.
Tui: I didn't think about this very much until I wrote this scene...and then suddenly I could see Asha clearly in my head, and the kind of dragon she was. I do think a kind guardian would have made a big difference...but then, of course, the story would have been less dramatic! Still, poor Clay and poor Asha!

He'd always believed there was someone out in the world waiting for him. He'd imagined finding his mother and father and how it would be just like the story. None of the scrolls they'd studied had talked about MudWing families, but he knew NightWings and SeaWings had mothers and fathers, so he'd always assumed all the dragon tribes were the same way.

Tui: One of the things that excited me about making up a world like this with different tribes is coming up with how they might each be different - not just in terms of physical skills, but in their family structures, fighting organization, hierarchies, etc. I can't wait for everyone to read book seven and find out what the IceWings are like when they're at home! And I get the impression this is fun for other people too, considering how many new tribe suggestions I get from brilliant readers every day!

"I forgot the MudWings are on Burn's side," said Clay. "We're lucky Cattail didn't know Burn was looking for us. Sh would have turned me over in a heartbeat."
Tui: I'm not sure this is true...I think her loyalty to her tribe would still take precedence over any feeling of obligation to Burn. But then again, if there were cows involved, I wouldn't trust her very far at all!

Chapter 34

"I'm Reed," said the biggest dragonet. "This is Sora, Pheasant, Marsh, and Umber."
Tui: I must admit I'm a little in love with these characters - I kind of want to write a parallel universe story where Clay did grow up with them, so we could see what they all would have been like together!

As they came to this part of the explanation, Glory gasped. She turned to Clay. "That's what it was!" she said. "When we hatched - the guardians didn't know anything about MudWings, so they thought you were attacking us. But you were trying to help. Your instinct told you to get the rest of us out of our shells."
Tui: This is the first scene I wrote (and rewrote and rewrote!), once from Webs' point of view, but mostly from Clay's, because I wanted to show he was misunderstood right from the moment he climbed out of his egg...and what a harsh welcome to the world it would be for him, when he's trying so hard to help the other eggs, but the guardians keep knocking him away and yelling at him. But then I decided it would be better for this to be a surprise both for us and for Clay, so I took it out and saved the revelation for right here.

He was a bigwings.
Tui: You might have noticed this book is dedicated to "my little bigwings" - he's the baby who was born as I was writing book one, and who became a big brother soon after I finished book two. I had a feeling then, and I'm even more convinced now, that he's going to be a really great bigwings!

"Besides," Glory said, "he can't stay with you. He's our *bigwings."*
Tui: Hopefully this has been pretty clear from everything I've written about Clay throughout the book...he's a wonderful bigwings, even if he doesn't realize it, and the other four are really lucky they ended up with him!

But he remembered the charred corpses on the battlefield, and he thought about his friends and how they'd try to go on without him.
Tui: Here's why we had to see scenes like the battlefield - because if we know the impact of the war, and if Clay's seen it firsthand, then there's no way he can walk away from his destiny (or what everyone thinks his destiny is, anyhow).

"That's us," Clay said, touching Glory's talon.
Tui: Subtext: I'll forgive you for the trick you played earlier, if you forgive me for ever making you feel like you weren't part of this "us."

☆
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***Clever,* *A Very Clevery Guy* ❤❤❤**
[exits, pursued by a bear]
bringing you cool good posts: Dec. 2014 - March 2019
appreciating and supporting you: today - forever!!!!

phoenixdragon1690

Ohh, I want an Asha Winglets now...

1

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Me too, I don't especially like MudWings (I don't dislike them either, to be clear), but re-reading this part of the book and the annotations makes me desperate to know more about them, and especially Asha.

2

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poke

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